

Agni Yoga: Teraphim

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Abstract

This e-book provides rather detailed information on the creation and uses of simple teraphim that is available in Agni Yoga books, Helena Roerich's daily records of her communication with Theosophical Mahatmas, and Helena Roerich's letters. Also included are a fictional story of teraphim found in Concordia Antarova's *Two Lives*, excerpts from Apollonius of Tyana's *Great Book of Talismans*, and description of dendas (Hindu magical wands) from H.P. Blavatsky's *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*.

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1. Magical Objects

To accomplish things, we use different kinds of tools: hammers, knives, computers, cars, etc. Some people believe that, besides ordinary tools, there are magical tools having special powers that cannot be explained by science. Some of these magical objects are:

1. **Amulets:** "An amulet, also known as a good luck charm, is an object believed to confer protection upon its possessor... Anything can function as an amulet; items commonly so used include gems, statues, coins, drawings, plant parts, animal parts, and written words." (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amulet>. All online materials have been retrieved February 14, 2022.)
2. **Crystal balls:** "A crystal ball, also known as an orbiculum or crystal sphere, is a crystal or glass ball and common fortune-telling object. It is generally associated with the performance of clairvoyance and scrying in particular." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crystal_ball)
3. **Magical mirrors:** Mirrors used for divination to see remote current events or scenes from the future. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_Mirror_\(Snow_White\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_Mirror_(Snow_White)))
4. **Sigils (yantras):** "A sigil... is a type of symbol used in magic. The term has usually referred to a type of pictorial signature of a deity or spirit. In modern usage, especially in the context of chaos magic, sigil refers to a symbolic representation of the practitioner's desired outcome." (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigil>)
5. **Talismans:** "A talisman is any object ascribed with religious or magical powers intended to protect, heal, or harm individuals for whom they are made. Talismans are often portable objects carried on someone in a variety of ways, but can also be installed permanently in architecture. Talismans are closely linked with amulets, fulfilling many of the same roles, but a key difference is in their form and materiality, with talismans often taking the form of objects like clothing, weaponry, or parchment inscribed with magic texts." (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talisman>)

6. Teraphim: "Teraphim (Hebrew: תְּרָפִים tərāf; plural: Hebrew: תְּרָפִים tərāfim) is a Hebrew word from the Bible, found only in the plural, of uncertain etymology. Despite being plural, Teraphim may refer to singular objects, using the Hebrew plural of excellence. The word Teraphim is explained in classical rabbinical literature as meaning disgraceful things (dismissed by modern etymologists), and in many English translations of the Bible it is translated as idols, or household god(s), although its exact meaning is more specific than this, but unknown precisely." (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teraphim>)

Iamlichus' note: English-language editions of Agni Yoga books and Helena Roerich's writings use *teraph* as a singular form of *teraphim*, even though Russian originals use *teraphim* only.

7. Wands: "A wand is a thin, light-weight rod that is held with one hand, and is traditionally made of wood, but may also be made of other materials, such as metal or plastic. Long versions of wands are often styled in forms of staves or sceptres, which could have large ornamentation on the top. In modern times, wands are usually associated with stage magic or supernatural magic..." (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wand>)

The primary purpose of this little e-book is to gather together information about magical objects available in Agni Yoga. Agni Yoga is a little known spiritual teaching publicized in the 20th century by Helena and Nicholas Roerichs who claimed direct contact with Morya and other Theosophical Mahatmas (refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agni_Yoga for more detail). They were receiving messages from their instructors over the course of 34 years and published selections from them in the form of 14 books. This book series is called *Agni Yoga* or informally the *Teaching of Living Ethics*. All these materials, plus important *Letters of Helena Roerich* and more, are freely available in multiple languages on the Agni Yoga Society website:

Agni Yoga Society. *Agni Yoga Series and Signs of Agni Yoga*. <https://agniyoga.org/>.

Roerich, Helena (1954). *Letters of Helena Roerich*. Volume I: 1929-1935.
https://agniyoga.org/ay_en/Letters-of-Helena-Roerich-I.php .

Roerich, Helena (1967). *Letters of Helena Roerich*. Volume II: 1935-1939.
https://agniyoga.org/ay_en/Letters-of-Helena-Roerich-II.php .

Helena Roerich's original notebooks (daily records of her communication with the Mahatmas) contain much material not included in the published books, but they were kept secret until the early 2000s when many of them (those owned by the Nicholas Roerich Museum in New York) have been published in Russia. They are now being translated into the English by White Mountain Education Association:

Rerikh, Elena Ivanovna (2007-2013). *Records of the Teaching of Living Ethics*, vol. 1-18.
[Russian.]

ru.theopedia.org/main/Подготовка_электронной_версии_«Записей_Учения_Живой_Этики» .

Roerich, Helena. *Helena Roerich's Notebooks*. <https://wmea-world.org/Helena-Roerich/notebooks/> .

Two types of magical objects mentioned in Agni Yoga primary materials are teraphim and magical mirrors. However, teraphim in Agni Yoga are given meaning that is much wider than usual. According to Agni Yoga, teraphim may be any object charged with hidden power that can be used for any purpose. It is like an electric or electronic device that includes a battery: a flashlight, a cell phone, etc. The key difference between an electric/electronic device and a teraphim is that the former uses an unanimated power familiar to science, whereas the latter uses hidden human energy that is called *psychic energy* in Agni Yoga.

The next chapter contains excerpts from Agni Yoga primary sources that provide a reasonably complete description of teraphim, their construction and their uses. Since Agni Yoga is 100% spiritually oriented, this information is safe and reliable, unlike the one provided by numerous commercial publications on magic.

The following chapters (ch. 3 to ch. 5) give interesting supplemental information on magical objects.

Information provided below is both thin and elementary, but it should be sufficient for general orientation in teraphim. **Delving deeper into this matter may be dangerous!!!** H.P. Blavatsky warned:

When ignorant of the true meaning of the esoteric divine symbols of nature, man is apt to miscalculate the powers of his soul, and, instead of communing spiritually and mentally with the higher, celestial beings, the good spirits (the gods of the theurgists of the Platonic school), he will unconsciously call forth the evil, dark powers which lurk around humanity — the undying, grim creations of human crimes and vices — and thus fall from theurgia (white magic) into goëtia (or black magic, sorcery). (H.P. Blavatsky's *Collected Writings*, vol. 2, p. 96; emphasis added)

Magic is a dual power: nothing is easier than to turn it into Sorcery; an evil thought suffices for it. Therefore while theoretical Occultism is harmless, and may do good, practical Magic, or the fruits of the Tree of Life and Knowledge, or otherwise the "Science of Good and Evil," is fraught with dangers and perils. For the study of theoretical Occultism there are, no doubt, a number of works that may be read with profit, besides such books as the *Finer Forces of Nature*, etc., the *Zohar*, *S'pher-Yetzirâh*, *The Book of Enoch*, Franck's *Kabalah*, and many Hermetic treatises. These are scarce in European languages, but works in Latin by the mediaeval Philosophers, generally known

as Alchemists and Rosicrucians, are plentiful. **But even the perusal of these may prove dangerous for the unguided student.** If approached without the right key to them, and if the student is unfit, owing to mental incapacity, for Magic, and is thus unable to discern the Right from the Left Path, let him take our advice and **leave this study alone**; he will only bring on himself and on his family unexpected woes and sorrows, never suspecting whence they come, nor what are the powers awakened by his mind being bent on them. Works for advanced students are many, but these **can be placed at the disposal of only sworn or “pledged” chelas (disciples), those who have pronounced the ever-binding oath, and who are, therefore, helped and protected.** For all other purposes, well-intentioned as such works may be, they can only mislead the unwary and guide them imperceptibly to Black Magic or Sorcery – if to nothing worse.

The mystic characters, alphabets and numerals found in the divisions and sub-divisions of the Great Kabalah, are, perhaps, the most dangerous portions in it, and especially the numerals. We say dangerous, because they are the most prompt to produce effects and results, and this **with or without the experimenter’s will, even without his knowledge.** Some students are apt to doubt this statement, simply because after manipulating these numerals they have failed to notice any dire physical manifestation or result. Such results would be found the least dangerous: it is the moral causes produced and the various events developed and brought to an unforeseen crisis, that would testify to the truth of what is now stated had the lay students only the power of discernment. (*Ibid.*, vol. 14, p. 59-61)

2. Teraphim in Agni Yoga

Letters of Helena Roerich, vol. I

What are teraphim? There is a great and complicated literature about teraphim. Teraphim have many forms and aspects. Broadly speaking, a teraph is a talisman or an accumulator of energies; thus, every article saturated with precipitations of psychic energy is a teraph. When saturated with the psychic energy of a specific command, the talisman or teraph conveys it to a person to whom it is sent. Often, in the past, teraphim acted as oracles. In antiquity the preparation of such teraphim was extremely complicated, and besides, the knowledge of astrology was widely applied. Of course, there are also astral teraphim, but such teraphim belong only to highly developed spirits. The secret of the preparation of such teraphim is in the hands of the great Arhats. Through such teraphim it is possible strongly to influence a person, and also to guard his health. If you have read about the experiments in the exteriorization of sensitiveness, you can imagine the influence of such teraphim to a certain extent. In the book *Agni Yoga* the creation of a simple teraph is explained in detail.

Agni Yoga Series

[References to *Agni Yoga Series* books are by book title and paragraph number. The first referenced book, *Agni Yoga*, has the same title as the whole series.]

Agni Yoga

419. We know about teraphs. We know that a teraph can be astral or material. The astral teraph is higher than the material one, just as the astral world is higher than the material world. Only very developed beings can have an astral teraph, whereas material teraphs can serve any conscious spirit. The teraph is a model of an actual event or thing. A navigator can more easily understand the behavior of his ship by studying a model of the vessel. Looking at the image, people, in a way, come into contact with what is absent. Even humble fortunetellers request first of all an image or an item closely connected with the subject. These objects direct their psychic energy, in order to increase its effect, like a beacon or a milestone.

With material teraphs, one must have a special image for every need. But the astral teraph has the advantage of serving all needs and of taking on different appearances as required. Therefore, it is like a milestone, marking one's steps in the development of consciousness. The astral teraph is a product of the crystallization of psychic energy, just as the material one is a product of physical effort. The chief action takes place during the creation of the teraph, for it is then that the psychic energy is most tense. Even though the astral teraph is superior, We can describe the technique of creating a material one.

420. The material teraph was usually made as a sculpted image, by using any object to which was added something belonging to a person referred to in the ritual. Often, after the death of the owner of the teraph, it was put into the tomb, as in ancient Egypt and in the burial monuments of the Mayans and Etruscans. When the funeral rites required cremation, the teraph followed into the fire.

In the Temple of Israel there was a general teraph for all uses, but for each ritual something belonging to the subject was placed under the teraph. Eventually, in the various countries there were scattered a multitude of teraphs, each one filled with the accumulations of many psychic transmissions. It is curious to observe the continued vitality of these accumulations of psychic energy. One can truly see that teraphs retain their power over thousands of years, like a seed that lives, manifesting undying power.

Of the experiments with psychic energy, the test demonstrating that it cannot be dispersed or destroyed is very important. The teraph is the best proof of this, especially if the aid of clairvoyance is available to the experimenter.

It is possible to make a teraph that carries an instruction whose effects will be known only in the future. The teraph can carry the message either to a particular person, or to someone else who will later own the teraph. Two things should be known—that the preparation of the teraph requires much time, and that much time is also needed for its effects to be revealed. The teaching about teraphs comes from great antiquity, when the Atlanteans knew about psychic energy.

How to make a teraph? A place must be used where the maker's psychic energy has saturated the space and has accumulated upon the objects in it. In this place a chosen image is molded out of wax, clay, or plaster. When the image has been created, it is then covered with a silver, crystal, or glass dome, or a leather cover.

421. During the rituals of saturating the teraph, as you know, chants were intoned, combinations of strange words often devoid of meaning. However, it is not the spoken form, but the rhythm that is important. The music of the spheres consists not of melodies but of rhythms. When the developed spirit knows the sounds of the spheres, it will understand the power of rhythm. So, while saturating the teraph the will and rhythm are the most important. It matters not with what words the mission is entrusted to the teraph. Important are the succession of the layers of meaning, the sincerity of the direct transmission, and the rhythm, which corresponds to *Mahavan*. Only the lesser consciousness needs ready-made commands. The developed consciousness can improvise words in accordance with the flow of psychic energy.

It is unnecessary to constrain oneself with memorized words. It is better to be imbued with rhythm, when each muscle merges in striving with the nerves. One vibrates as an integral whole, and the power of command is transferred by laying the hands upon the teraph. One should be imbued by a single-minded striving when creating a teraph. One should charge the teraph not less than three times daily.

In order to better invest the teraph with the power of your will, do not make its surface too highly polished. It is effective to cover it with a fabric and to burn resinous essences near it. Eucalyptus is good for this.

423. What is the relation between physical musk and the phosphorus of spirit? Musk is also the product of fire, but of an unconscious fire. Yet even the crystal produced by unconscious fire contains the treasure.

Is not the pure Fire of Space a living link with the higher worlds? Will not this simple question arise in the unprejudiced consciousness? And if we see the teraph as a repository of psychic energy, this concept, though ancient, will be easy to understand. So let us not be afraid to open a Pandora's box; for the enlightened traveler its gifts may appear quite different.

433. Urusvati [i.e., Helena Roerich] saw the so-called Wheel of Buddha. This is actually the teraph of the far-off worlds. Its essence is contained in the foundation of the Universe, which may be seen as a pestle. At its ends are the spheres of polarity corresponding to the two basic laws. At the center is the swastika-like wheel of psychic energy. And the circle of the whirling rainbow is the manifestation of all stages of Spatial Fire. Knowing this is a step toward the mastery of fire; by visualizing this structure the approach of fire can be evoked, and its dangerous essence transformed into a healing property.

The teraph from the far-off worlds has been made real by Urusvati; this required a great expenditure of energy. The main aim was to bring it to life, for it to become a harmonized part of her aura. After this was accomplished, a short rest was needed. Then, the inner tasks could be given to her immediately. Urusvati is Radhastana, who has breached the boundary between the two worlds.

Heart

270. Teraphim may be artificial or alive. For events of worldwide scope living teraphim are chosen; people call them the anointed, because their link with the Hierarchy marks them with physical stigmata. Although these teraphim may not affirm anything out loud, the dark ones still sense the grace conferred in the anointment, and they commit betrayal in order to arrest the growth of the Good. You must courageously guard yourself from traitors and draw on energy from the heart. There is no need to worry over the growth of the Good—where there is a seed of Light, there are flowers and fruit as well. But you must hold onto the thread of the heart as the sole anchor.

Fiery World I

367. One should remember about harmful objects. People are sometimes willing to acknowledge a certain significance in teraphim fashioned for the purpose of influencing people. But, after all, many objects carry upon them accumulations of influences. Not rare are the objects made in an hour of hatred, fatigue, terror, or despair; they will carry these sendings with them into the world. And if they fall into the hands of an owner who is under the same astrochemical conditions, they will act in accordance with the message with which they have been suffused. Sociologists are trying to improve working conditions. This is right, but in addition the spiritual level of the workers should be raised. It does not matter whether they create great things or small, the poisonous saliva can saturate them equally. For natural magnetism there is no need of special black magic. Black fire fills every evil heart, therefore let us be very observant in regard to objects. One may recall that Apollonius of Tyana never touched objects that were unfamiliar to him. First he looked at them carefully, especially when they were ancient. When one of his disciples wanted to put a ring on his finger, the Teacher warned him against touching poison. A deadly poison was discovered concealed in the ring. And Apollonius added, "Such poison is less deadly than the poison of the heart." One should not regard the sayings of the sages as remote symbols. Often they have a literal meaning, which must be remembered and applied. We do not go to a shop to purchase clothing infected with smallpox; yet this infection will be only a one-thousandth part of the contagion present. How often have I stated that the accumulations of thought are far more virulent than poisons! Just as fire deposits a patina upon a vessel, so is the fire of thought irremovable when it saturates the surface of an object. Among purifiers eucalyptus is useful, for it contains much fire. All living fire is also useful. Much infection has been destroyed around bonfires.

536. One can realize only with difficulty how greatly needed for the earthly plane is subtle construction. But many structures of the Subtle World are, as it were, actual teraphim for the future of Earth. Often the completion of such subtle teraphim is even more essential than the earthly structures. In them is laid, as it were, the root of constructive thinking. Therefore, We rejoice when the prototype is already completed. Of course, one can rejoice only at a successful prototype.

Fiery World II

403. Some people walk into the future with full trust. Whence can be drawn such invincible confidence? First of all, from communion with Hierarchy. But understanding of the Luminaries also strengthens the consciousness. Moreover, there is still a third circumstance which has no small significance. Actually, the three Worlds exist in full cooperation. The affirmation of many earthly beginnings takes place in the Higher Worlds. You know about earthly teraphim; there can be likewise teraphim of the Subtle and of the Fiery World. Not infrequently entire

structures, prior to their earthly realization, have been created in the Higher Worlds. One may read in the ancient Scriptures about Heavenly Cities; in fact, they are being constructed in reality upon different spheres, and thus a magnetic attraction is created. Often people do not suspect that their teraphim already exist in various forms. At times the clairvoyants perceive such actual images, and erroneously carry over what they see to the earthly plane, whereas the earthly reflection is formed later. But one fact is unquestionable—precisely, the existence of such teraphim—it strengthens the consciousness of man. Can it not be that certain cities already do exist, and named people live in them? One may walk into the future as assuredly as if the delineations of the city were before the earthly eyesight.

Supermundane

17. Urusvati has not forgotten that in Our repositories there are models of many cities and historical places, which have a particular inner meaning. They serve as teraphim to establish a link between the ancient places and new tasks. Also preserved in Our repositories are important objects that are sometimes sent into the world as magnets for planned actions.

It has great significance when Our messengers travel through designated places. In some they bury certain objects, in others they simply pass by, thus strengthening the aura of those places. People do not pay attention to these pilgrimages, but a historian's eye could perceive the periodic nature of such travels. It could then be seen that the consecrated places proved to be especially important in the history of nations.

In addition to the inhabitants of the Stronghold of the Brotherhood, there are others living on Earth who carry out Our missions. One can trace how in different countries, throughout history, people appeared whose tasks and methods of accomplishing them had much in common. Usually these people were regarded with suspicion and hostility because something was sensed in them that could not be expressed in words.

In Our archives maps can be seen on which boundaries are traced that do not conform to the present-day ones. The buried magnets are indicated by stars. Sometimes the significance of these deposited magnets is revealed in just a few years.

60. If an artist were to depict Our Abode even approximately, the product of his imagination could be used as a teraph. But the best teraph is the human heart. A powerful magnet is developed from heart to heart, and such an attraction can be strong, even physically. The attraction to Our Heart can increase so greatly that it would be impossible to restrain it. This is called "the Fiery Chariot." Such fiery sensations require great harmony, otherwise they can turn into a chaotic whirlwind.

134. Urusvati knows about teraphim. Some may wonder if the idea of teraphim does not contradict the idea of power of thought. If thought is the strongest manifestation, why then would an object be needed to serve as a focus for concentrating it? It is true that teraphim are

not needed for a powerful mental message, but they can be used to economize mental power. Each kind of energy must be used intelligently. The object that serves to accumulate energy also serves to multiply it. Such objects preserve the precipitations of energy, which can be gradually intensified. From ancient times teraphim have been regarded as sacred, but today this concept has become a scientific one.

We have a number of teraphim which facilitate the sending of help to Our dear ones. It is important to understand that such accumulated energy can be a healing power by helping in the transmission of certain vibrations. All beneficial measures should be taken into consideration.

The Stone from the far-off worlds is a significant teraph of the Brotherhood. Much has been written about this Stone. A part of it performs the duty of a messenger throughout the world, carried by the hands of the chosen. People call the Stone "Grail," but it has also been called by many other names. Legends of all times reveal some of the truth regarding this Stone, but its most significant aspect is not mentioned—the Stone is permeated with a substance that helps to preserve the vibrational communications with the far-off worlds. Likewise, a small particle of the Stone serves as a link with the Brotherhood. Thus again there is a scientific basis for a legend which has become a part of human history. We purposely emphasize the scientific aspect of this legend because the ignorant ones are ever ready to attribute everything to the darkness of superstition. Urusvati knows this Stone of Our Abode. We preserve it in a special place so that the vibrations may retain their original power.

We must point out that the vibrational energy of meteors has not been studied. Some contain particles of remarkable metals which, though small, can still be traced. The mind of the researcher should not be limited by old methods.

Some people may be interested to know more about the whereabouts of the Stone. The place where it was first revealed became the foundation of Shambhala, and it intensified the chemical significance of the Abode. Many stories could be told about this messenger from the far-off worlds. You already know about certain guardians who have particles of this Stone, and you can confirm how the Stone reveals itself. You will be astonished to know how many different countries and heroes are connected with it, and how many great deeds were inspired by the legends pertaining to it.

The fierce adversaries of the Brotherhood have also heard about the Stone, and its saga is extremely repulsive to them. They do not understand the essence of this phenomenon and thus are full of hatred and fear of it.

May reliable friends guard the story of the Stone.

538. Urusvati knows about the transmittance of sensations and feelings at a distance. This confirms even more the presence of the psychic energy that permeates all of space. Let us not forget that teraphim can be used to facilitate such transmissions, but there is no need to hold any kind of image if the energy is being sent by command of the will. Teraphim can serve to help the transmittance, but a strong will has no need for such assistance.

In life, transmissions of sensations occur as often as do thought transmissions, but they are overlooked by people. Sensations can be transmitted consciously and intentionally, but also unconsciously. The unconscious transmissions are far more frequent than conscious ones and can cause painful sensations and moods.

Records of the Teaching of Living Ethics

[*Records* entries are referenced by date received. Helena Roerich's questions are italicized.]

1 June 1927

The small model of B[elukha] will be the teraph of the center of Asia. [Refer to <https://www.bradtguides.com/destinations/asia/kazakhstan/altai-mountains/> for more on Belukha which is considered a sacred mountain by followers of Agni Yoga.]

13 February 1928

Our image of Urusvati is like a teraph.

- *But why was I so attracted, like a magnet, to my likeness?* – Teraph both protects and attracts.

15 February 1928

Now it is necessary to apply all caution and care for a pleasant path. We watch the fiery experience. The timely production of the teraph helped, for which the image of Urusvati was taken. Now rest.

– *Why didn't the Teacher make teraphs of F[uyama] [i.e., Nicholas Roerich] and myself earlier?* – For the teraph must be renewed because the currents dry up.

2 May 1928

I saw my teraph as a large face, white-silver, almost transparent, with some kind of white silvery fabric flowing over dark hair.

3 May 1928

– *What does the vision of a covered teraph mean?* – It seems covered due to an influx of energy.

29 May 1928

The teacher understands the [Himalayan] community as a teraph for the future.

30 November 1928

- *I saw a huge planet of amazing silvery light, with radiance in the form of a large tail or outgrowth going from it to the side.* - Jupiter carries radiance in the form of a tail.

- It seemed to me that it was also a teraph. - Exactly, a teraph with a characteristic feature. For We need to observe different bodies. Due to a teraph We can approach the real planet. It would be interesting to look at Saturn, but for this we will choose a moment of nervous vigilance. You need to take it simply, because the most complex factory is simple.

15 December 1928

Let's start building a city. Ponder on the flow of funds. We won't give the current to wash away the piles. Please do not worry and do not be upset if here it was necessary to restrain psychic energy, whereas in a purer place the current may be released. The teraph of a distant world demands a share of the energy. But the main thing is to realize the teraph so that it gets compatible with the aura. This realization of the teraph has taken place. A short break is useful as it helps inner work. Just please don't mind people who can't control their minds. Now ask your questions.

- Why was my teraph covered with a luminous matter? - Our protection.

- The vision of fire and teraph was accompanied by a glassy sound in my ears. - Of course, the teraph feeds on psychic energy, for the energy is straining.

23 April 1933

The picture will help; besides, it is unsuitable for a teraph. A teraph needs hair, nails, or clothing soaked in sweat, saliva, tears or blood, but these substances are difficult to obtain in Paris.

3. Teraphim in Concordia Antarova's *Two Lives*

[Concordia Antarova (1886-1959), a Russian singer and Theosophist, wrote a remarkable three-volume novel entitled *Two Lives*. For more on Antarova, refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordia_Antarova. The Russian original of *Two Lives* is freely available on the Web. The third volume of *Two Lives* includes a fictional old man's tale that incorporates a story of teraphim buried in certain locations to serve as focal points of spiritual power. Below is the relevant part of the tale in my translation from the Russian.]

AN OLD MAN'S TALE

Once there lived a wise old man. His wife died early and left him three sons and a little daughter. The sons matured, entered into strength, and their wise father once said to them:

"Here is what, my children, I must tell you. An old man from a remote monastery came to me and ordered me to release all three of you into the wide world. He told me that I brought you up in firm rules of honor and kindness and that you need to carry them into the world, so that it would be easier and more joyful for people to live next to you. Go, my dears. Let each of you go alone; do not take a lot of things and food with you. You are young; earning here and there, you will reach a bustling city. There you will disperse in different directions, and everyone will find a city for himself, where he will live among people, serving them as best he can. So the old man asked me to tell you."

The sons were saddened that they had to leave their father, their home, their favorite places, forests and mountains, the beauty of which they appreciated so much. But the wise father consoled them, reminding them that there is nothing eternal on earth, except for the love and peace that a person carries within himself. Sooner or later people will have to part, death will certainly separate them. Well, love and peace are probably not enough for people in noisy cities; and to serve people with them is the duty of everyone who has reached such joy that he has managed to find them in himself.

The whole village, the young and the old, went to see off the three young travelers.

The brothers walked for a long time. They earned their living by working. Everywhere people gladly received three stately fellows, excellent workers, everywhere people rejoiced at their company and the songs of their younger brother, and let them go on with blessings, with occasionally only a few shaking their heads and saying: "Far away," when the brothers called the big city where the old man has sent them.

Sooner or later, but the brothers reached the big city and in the very center of it, on the market square, they found a house where they rented a room from an old childless couple.

After resting from a long journey, the brothers began to ponder on where they should go further. For the first time, they had to be separated. For the first time, everyone decides their own life affairs on their own, without the wise advice of their father. Everyone's heart was sad. They recalled a clean and joyful home, where they lived so carelessly, where questions did not arise at every step: what to do, what to tell to those whom they met, how to console the mourner. And the more deeply the brothers thought about their former life and about the minute that had now passed, the more clearly they saw how much happiness their father gave them, having developed in them confidence in their abilities and an understanding of what lies in the backbone of a man and on what his whole character is based.

Apollo, the youngest brother, who was the first to leave, was the last to arrive in an unfamiliar huge city. [He met two poor children and their dog and stayed with them until they could stand on their own legs. Unsure what to do next, he mulled his situation and then heard the voice of his wise father.]

"Do you remember, Apollo, how a few years ago you were sitting on this very bench, full of mournful thoughts and sadness from separation from me? Then my voice encouraged you. I showed you the way how to go forward courageously, without ever showing the children of your despondency, how to instill in them self-confidence in all failures and strengthen their joy with your calmness. Your loyalty to my commandments has not wavered. You did not lament that I, having given you a covenant of a broad lesson in serving crowds of people, bound you for a number of years with two poor orphans and their dog companion.

"Now your children are self-sufficient and successful in their arts, and the time has come for you to leave them in order to serve the paths of beauty to people, as they themselves can and will be able to.

"Do not be hurt in your heart when you leave the children you love as if they were your closest relatives. Leave the last convention of personal attachment and go to the places that I will show you.

"There are no superstitiously blessed places on earth. But there are places where many righteous, selfless, and pure people have cleansed the atmosphere of the Earth for many miles around by many years of pure joy.

"You will go to several such places and leave Mirrors of Wisdom there, which I will tell you or which you yourself will prepare. Some of them that I will show you, you will carry out in songs and prayers to people, meeting with them everywhere. But you will hide the especially sacred part in earth and stones. The power of their Light will be seen by those whose hearts are pure. And those who seek the Truth and its ways will settle there for many centuries.

" Do not think that, going around the world, you will leave my covenants for certain sects and people who narrowly see God merely in the human rituals. Not for the righteous, but for sinners seeking and longing to be freed, you will go.

"Here you sat a few years ago as a young man who did not know the whole abyss of sin and sorrow, all the darkness of falls and the hypocrisy of people. Here you forgave and blessed the woman who sprayed you with the poison of lies and curses for rejecting her physical love. And just as your heart was able to pass on to her not a sentence of condemnation, but to give the gift of the love of the One, so my heart merged with yours in the Love of the One, for your work in every simple day.

"He who has not condemned and forgiven the enemy, who has forgiven not from the mind, but from all great, humble Love, is free, and God lives and shines in him.

"He who did not accept the splendor of external gifts, but gave his life to the wretched, having seen Me in him, is free, and God lives and shines in him.

"He who has departed from the family and understood love as the core of the Eternal in everyone he meets, who does not regret the bliss of the past, who does not grieve in the present, who is not horrified by the future - is free, and God lives and shines in him.

"Go to those places that I will show you, fearlessly, easily, cheerfully. Lay in them a path for meetings and liberation of the burdened, so that the time of understanding can approach. The one who gives his soul for his fellow men lays a grain of Light, and a new force is born that liberates people.

"I do not lay a yoke on your shoulders. My work is not woven into your days with a yoke, but your hands will bear the beauty of the cup of Love, so that I can share the burden and the sorrows of people. From the chalice of Life, pour Fire into those places where you bury the Mirrors of Wisdom, so that it would be easier for people to reveal the purity of their hearts and take communion of my illumination.

"You did not call me, my faithful son, but acted on the Earth as I indicated to you. Your loyalty to me was not in dreams and vows, but in the simple affairs of everyday life. Now the Joy is revealed in you. Go, do your lesson and wait for further instructions."

Not that Apollo, almost a boy, was now sitting on the bench, recalling the scenes of distant days, the days of the first wandering experiences when he met the little orphans. Boy the violinist, who had worked and studied a lot since then, now amazed the world. The girl, a singer and dancer, became a celebrity. The orphans did not forget their aged dog; they saw in him even now one of their best friends and spoiled him as best they could to make him happy and content. They begged Apollo to visit the place where they had once met him and give a concert in the city where they had been so cruelly received seven years ago.

Now there on the bench sat a young mature man, broad-shouldered, tall and with a beaming face. But there was something in this young face that did not allow people to be casual with him, to talk vulgar things in his presence and scold. Everyone wanted to hide their bestial sides and show more beauty and dignity when Apollo's shining eyes rested on them.

Now, having heard the voice of his father, whom he had not heard since long ago when he was sitting here for the first time and his heart was bleeding, he was completely transformed. It now seemed to him that it was precisely this call of his father that he had been waiting for several days. He realized that his current task, the task that had held him back before proceeding with a broader plan of action, was now over.

He then regretted that he did not have a family, that he was lonely and homeless - and now Life has sent him a family, a home, and comfort. He underwent all the personal happiness of a family man and realized that this is also an illusion, that Eternity is not where happiness passes, but where It Itself *lives*. And It lives where a person *creates*.

Apollo's thoughts swept like a whirlwind through the entire experience lived during this period of time. He realized that people need to look for ways to creativity, otherwise they will suffocate in that atmosphere of death which rules wherever the search for freedom and peace ends.

He understood why his father needed hearths of Light, why he needed places where those liberated from passions live, and a new wave of happiness and jubilation flooded his heart. How easy and small his personal separation from his children seemed to him, so close and beloved. He more clearly understood why his father did not cry and yearn, sending all his sons away. Apollo understood *what* the father saw in the way of each son and Whom he served, tearing them away from his heart and the native nest.

Apollo walked for a long time with a caravan, having landed from an Italian ship, and finally came to the Ganges River. He had to go even further until he found the needed place among the forests of India. Here he suddenly heard his father's voice:

“Put the last Mirror of Wisdom in a hole at the foot of the rock, cover it with stones and return to me. There will be at this place a Community supporting people in their appalling moments. People of different paths, religions and quests will be able to approach this Community, but only those of them whose hearts and minds will merge in harmony. Those who are yet unable to attain harmony through many centuries of their lives, they will live in distant places from here, where it is no longer your task to lay down my covenants. Be blessed and come home. As you were faithful to me in this life, so your loyalty will be strengthened in the next life where the chalice of Fire will be tantamount to earthly death for you.”

Apollo made the whole way back in contemplative mood and no one would now recognize in the emaciated, ragged traveler that cheerful, handsome young man who once left his father's house with a lyre.

4. Apollonius of Tyana's Talismans

Apollonius of Tyana (c. 3 BC – c. 97 AD) was a wandering neo-Pythagorean philosopher, a mystic, and presumably an initiate. He was known as a skillful talisman maker and composed a manual entitled *The Great Book of Talismans*. For more on Apollonius refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollonius_of_Tyana. What follows is based on the following scholarly article:

Raggetti, Lucia (2019). Apollonius of Tyana's *Great Book of Talismans*. *Nuncius*, vol. 34, p. 155–182. Available online at https://brill.com/view/journals/nun/34/1/article-p155_6.xml?language=en&ebody=metrics-49928. Retrieved February 16, 2022.

According to an ancient source quoted by Raggetti,

During the reign of the Emperor Domitianus lived the most wise Apollonius of Tyana, who wandered around in all regions and cities, and made telesmata [i.e., talismans] everywhere he went. Then he went to Byzantium, and also made telesmata in other cities. He came from Tyana in Syria, and went to the great Antioch, where he was asked by the top citizens to make different Telesmata there as well, against the things that were troubling the city. He made one against the North wind, which he placed at the Eastern gate of the city. Then he made another telesma against the scorpions, which chased them away from the region. After he had moulded a copper scorpion, he had it buried in the middle of the city, and a small column was placed on that spot. Once he had done this, the scorpions disappeared, and did not infest the town or the neighbouring areas ever again. Then the citizens of Antioch asked him for another one against an infestation of mosquitos; he obliged, and never again was a mosquito seen there.

Raggetti notes that talismans made by Apollonius were intended for such varied purposes as "protection for people and their environment against obnoxious animals and pests, the favour of the king, turn[ing] an enemy into a friend (and vice versa), and the discovery of hidden secrets and treasures." Some of them were statues mounted on a pillar, others, mirrors molded from different metals. Here are some of Apollonius' instructions for talisman makers:

[T]ake copper, iron, lead, black lead, silver, gold, qarṭūlas –that is, crushed glass – mould everything, and make a single mirror out of them, then polish it very well. Then write these noble names on it, on a Friday in the eighth hour. Write the name of Venus, the name of the Angel that presides over her, and the name of the angel that presides over the month in which you are.

When you want to see the earth and everything that is on it, every climate and its country, look into this mirror, and you will see everything in the seven climates.

When you want to look up into the air, in the direction of the place that it is not necessary to mention, then look into the middle of the mirror, after tracing in its middle one of the four letters that cover the four corners of the world.

The same when you want to look down, that is, to the lowest of the low.

5. Hindu Magical Wands

[Helena P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), the principal founder of the Theosophical movement, wrote several entertaining, but deep popular novels, chief among them being *From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan* (1883-1886). It touches upon many important topics, from the nature of the Supreme Reality to technical aspects of occultism. One of these topics is Hindu magical wands called dendas. Dendas may be considered a variety of teraphim in the Agni Yoga sense. Below is a slightly abridged excerpt from Chapter XXXIV in my translation from the Russian. It provides an excellent description of dendas and their mode of operation.]

- What kind of bamboo do you have, Ananda Swami? - he [Olcott] suddenly asked, taking up a new subject and looking with curiosity at the stick hanging on the ascetic's hand.
- This is Hanumanta-bera ... the magic wand of all Madras ascetics, - babu interfered.
- Is it so? - the colonel asked not sure about babu's knowledge. - Can I ask you, Ananda-Swami, to give me a few details on this?.. I read about such a rod in the writings of Jacolliot. Does he describe it correctly?
- No, because he collected his information from those who themselves did not know anything about dendas (the name of the wand) and sinfully deceived him.
- Well, can you give us the history of this bamboo of yours and tell us why it is considered magical and is called "Hanuman's"?
- I can. You are Theosophists and are entitled to our trust. I am at your service. Ask.
- So why, for example, while rejecting the gods as fairy tales, you wear items dedicated to Shiva and Hanuman? What is the secret?
- There is no slightest secret in this. The thing is that in our mythology there is no fable that would not be based on truth. I wear rudrakshas and dendas not because the Brahmins have

taken it into their heads to surround this truth with the fog of this or that fable, but because the tree and the fruit from which they are made have properties in themselves that are useful for certain specific purpose.

- However, this is a rather risky business for you. Those to whom you do not explain the essence of the matter and the reason for such an action will not see any difference between you and hatha yogis.

- Having renounced the world, we see no reason to be concerned about one or another of its opinions about us. People can think about us whatever they wish.

- You just talked about the properties of the tree and the fruit of denda and rudraksha that are useful for your purpose. Can you tell us something about these properties?

- I can tell you only the dead letter of the legend and the rituals based on it. The real meaning is revealed only after the third initiation.

Hanumanta-bera (Hanuman's tree) grows only on the Udayagir hills, in the Madras Presidency, - Ananda began in his quiet, monotonous voice. - Hanumanta-bera is the favorite tree of Hanuman's monkey breed, and therefore it became sacred and named after him. Some ignorant materialists are able to see in Hanuman a real monkey, and in him - a god. Hanuman is called in our mythology the vahan of Rama, that is, the seat or physical prototype of the one who represents the personification of the qualities of the sun. Our ancestors were children of the sun, Suryavanses, allies of the sun of the south and the tropics, as well as allies of the great "king-sun" in a metaphorical sense. Hanuman, in short, if you look at him in a symbolic sense, is a collectively taken representation of the southern peoples. Even in the West, historically he is Bhimasena, the son of Kunti, Krishna's aunt, on the paternal side, and mythologically, the son of Vayu, the god of air, the guardian and carrier by the river Virajaya, the Hindu Styx, which every mortal has to cross in the world of shadows, and which no one can cross without the help of Hanuman. The meaning of this is that before man reaches, in other and more perfect worlds, that point of progress when he no longer needs a grossly objective image, he must start from the starting point of humanity, under the guise of an ape-like man, with all his animal passions and instincts. In order to become a deva, one must first be born a human. Every step leading to the highest goal must be conquered by personal efforts and merits. It is not difficult to understand why the Brahmins teach that this river Virajaya, which they say has such great symbolic significance in our spiritual evolution, is guarded by Hanuman, and then why the monkey-god himself is held in such esteem. While bathing at sunrise, each Brahmin is obliged to close the nostrils, ears, eyes and mouth with the fingers of both hands, focus all his attention on the sacred four-syllable word "Virajaya", and pronounce it three times in a loud voice. This daily rite is especially obligatory for Brahmin-brahmacharyas.

On the day of Hanumant Jayanti, worshipers of the warrior monkey fast all day and perform puja. Then, exactly at the "happy" hour appointed by the dedicated astrologers, they go to the Udayagir hills, where, having performed all the prescribed ceremonies, they cut the sticks from the sacred trees of Hanumanta-bera and carry them to their home.

- Same as your stick?
- They look exactly the same. But since there are very few learned Brahmins who manage to complete the preparation of the stick, because it takes more than a year of daily care until the stick turns into a "magic wand", they are extremely rare in the end.
- And what are the properties of the "wand" when it is prepared in accordance with all the rules?
- It depends on its owner, as well as in matters of rudraksha, tulsi and other similar items. Its reported properties are varied. If you ask a sectarian Brahmin about them, he will answer you that by means of his denda he can call up the "spirits" subject to him and force the pisachas [demons] to come out of the human bodies they take possession of; that denda helps to acquire and develop clairvoyance; protects the owner from jinns (evil spirits), diseases and the evil eye; cures all kinds of ailments; in a word, that its properties are the same as those of the great "monkey-god", and so on.
- But you are only repeating to us what the sectarian would probably answer to our question. You don't belong to that class, do you? So we would like to know what you will answer us.
- I will answer that a stick without a hand that gives it the strength to perform this or that feat is useless; that in the hand of a Raja Yogi, whose mind and will act quite consciously, the stick becomes the conductor of this will, like a telegraph wire, conducting the thoughts of the one who sends the dispatch, but remaining in the absence of such an agent a simple piece of metal. In the hand of a hatha yogi, its effects are often amazing, but since the mind of the driving force acts unconsciously, the properties of the denda are varied and do not always agree with reason and strict morality.
- But does a hatha yogi act unconsciously, like our mediums?
- No, not at all. In principle, his own desires and even thinking are at work; therefore, he does not act unconsciously. But, believing in his non-existent gods and their help, he is not aware of his full consciousness and does not recognize his personal control. Separating action from causality, i.e., from his conscious will, because most of these miraculous sannyasis are not philosophers, but simply fanatics, he himself considers the phenomena he produces to be the work of Hanuman and misleads others, sowing only superstition instead of knowledge and good, and often commits a great evil.
- So, therefore, my saligram will not act without my will? But how can I make it to submit to my will? Tell me, for the sake of truth and in the name of humanity. Can I, for example, use it for healing by performing mesmeric passes?

- If the will in you is strong, the desire to help and love for humanity are unshakable, then you will probably have a strong effect on it over time. But, I repeat, your saligram also has its own, specially inherent qualities. This is also a kind of magnet with which you can do different experiments, diversifying them to infinity, but the specific properties of which will always remain with it.

- Gare aux vaches, mon colonel [Watch out for the cows, colonel], - I laughed.

- Oh, please leave it! Don't interfere! - the deeply interested President waved his hands. - Well, what about your rudrakshas, around your neck, tulsi and those ascetic tutti quanti? What about them? The same as the denda, right? After all, they are all shrines, Shiva and Vishnu, various rudras and devas, in which you do not believe, but whose emblems you still wear as if there are no other items in the world with the same useful properties? - The colonel winked at the ascetic, who didn't raise an eyebrow.

- You are wrong. I just do not believe in the essence and personality of such gods. I reject the shadow, but not being itself. I believe in these world forces, clothed in popular fantasy in the form of a preserver and a destroyer; and knowing some of the secret relationships of such forces with the forces of nature and its material products, I cannot but believe in them. Otherwise, such persons as Thakur [the Mahatma] and even myself would not give themselves completely to their service.

- But why in this case, - I asked, addressing him directly for the first time, - such people as Thakur allow to sacrifice truth and spirit to the form? For example, our Mulji smeared his forehead with white ash. What is this for?

- This is not "soiling", mam-saib, - answered the slightly offended "general", - but respect for age-old customs.

- But you are not a Shaiva, why do you follow the custom of these sectarians?

- Because it is common.

- But what is the philosophy behind of this common custom? What is it based on?

- Such rubbing is based on hygiene, - Ananda explained. - Shaiva ascetics avoid many epidemic diseases in this way. After all, this is not the ashes of burnt bodies, but of one medicinal root mixed with cow dung.

- But why don't Raja Yogis rub their bodies with this pleasant... remedy?

- They have others and even better ones.

- That's why they must not age; at least outwardly, - I thought, looking at Ananda.

Olcott continued to squint at the denda and his guru's necklace and attacked again.

- All this is true, and you perfectly well explained to us why you do not do this or that. But so far I cannot get why Raja Yogis, both initiates and candidates for initiation, still do some of what is practiced by Hatha Yogis? What is the difference, for example, in the use of dendas and rudrakshas by a raja yogi and a hatha yogi?

- This can only be explained to someone who has a correct view of the difference between these two kinds of yogism and of the natural properties of these objects. Hatha Yoga is a later and, in comparison with Raja Yoga, a modern compromised form of mysticism; it is the result of centuries of careless handling of philosophy, the victory of external form and ritual over the spirit of teaching; and then the gradual degeneration of brahma-vidya, divine wisdom. Having lost, due to personal ambition and earthly passions, the ability to unite with Brahma, that is, with absolute nature, most of the Brahmins, alienated from the final supreme initiation, the difficulties of which they could not overcome, replaced Raja Yoga with Hatha Yoga. Those who believe in the reality of the latter are convinced that Shiva-Mahatmiam himself sits in every grain of rudraksha, which is why they attribute any phenomenon that occurs with the help of, for example, rudraksha, like clairvoyance or healing of a disease, not to their own strength and will, but to direct action and participation of Shiva. The Raja Yogi, on the contrary, rejects both such interference and the personality of Shiva in principle. For him there are no anthropomorphic gods, there is only an absolute, double-edged power of creation and destruction, the primordial matter, universal and single, an integral part of which is himself, although in the deceptive consciousness of earthly sensations he is a transient individual. Having checked its properties through years of methodical experiments and realizing this power in himself, he bestows it on a given object, i.e., concentrates it in it, whether it be a Rudraksha, Saligram or Denda object; and then, on occasion, gives this or that direction to this force, the dual quality of which is attraction and repulsion, doing this at his own will and discretion. Shiva has nothing to do with it. In the same way, he turns the denda wand into a vahan, filling it with his strength and spirit and transferring his own properties to it for a while. In the West you have a magnetizer, impregnating paper or some other object for use by the sick with his vital current, and does the same thing, only on an incomparably smaller scale.

- Excuse me... You talk about strength, spirit, properties, and power, as if it all comes down to vitality, to a "magnetic" current. I understand that a magnetizer can saturate an inanimate object with an excess of his vitality in the form of healing energy, I myself have done so; but how can I understand your statement about the transfer to this object of will, thinking, conscious actions, etc., that is immaterial, purely mental qualities and properties? Is this possible?

- For someone who knows absolutely nothing about Raja Yogis and real Brahma Vidya or knows very little, for someone who is not familiar with the psychology of the East, the substance is the fruit of his own views, the conclusions of Western science and its hypotheses,

that is the fruit of relative conceptions. For him, every substance, from the current of the vital force to the mineral, is matter. He does not know the transitional degrees from a conditional and limited substance to a primitive and unconditional substance, that is, to the primal matter - Mula-prakriti. Therefore, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to explain to him the essence of the actions of a Raja Yogi and the transfer of the essence of his creative power to an inanimate object. For the Western scientist, whose concepts of matter are based on the relations of his organism with the outside world and are limited by this framework, everything that is not matter is either "nothing" or a purely incorporeal quality. He either does not believe in the spirit, or if he does, he is unable to get a clear idea of the "spirit-sat" [sat = being] and "spirit-power." In his opinion, the spirit is something immaterial, therefore inseparable and not transferable. But he does not know the properties and all the conditions of force. The theurgy of the ancient Westerners, however, gives us in its chronicles countless examples of inanimate objects endowed with temporal movement and, as it were, consciousness and even arbitrary behavior. The same is evidenced by the religious beliefs of modern Westerners. But in the end, what does a Western scientist know about the world substance, about its essence and modifications? Everything that you know about matter and its properties, about physical and spiritual feelings, all this is only relative knowledge, conditioned by the properties of your own earthly organism, your own personal experiences and the conclusions of science, and is based on external feelings rather than on actual qualities of substances. Therefore, if I tell you that the time is not far off when, starting with preserves and extracts from beef, milk and other animal products, your chemists will finally reach the extracts of the vital principle, which has already been partly produced since ancient times by homeopaths and such unsuspecting alchemists, like a certain Professor Jaeger, you will laugh. Despite such disbelief, I take liberty to offer you this information in the form of a prophecy.

- But how is such comparison possible? Is it possible to cork the spirit in a bottle? After all, we only read in the fairy tale about the fisherman and the genie, about the spirit planted in a vessel under the seal of King Solomon in the *Thousand and One Nights*.

- So why did you choose this particular seal for the motto of your society?

- Because it is the figure of Sri Antara, chakras or "wheels of Vishnu", the most ancient symbol of India.

- The Seal of Solomon, found among us, as well as among the Chaldeans, the primitive peoples of Europe, the natives of both Americas, in Africa, and in Asia, proves only one thing: the tale of the fisherman and the genie is based on fact. Jinn, that is an evil and at the same time kind, helpful spirit, is the personified symbol of that force in nature that I told you about: the force that creates and destroys, attracts and repels. Solomon in folk legends is the same "magician" and adept. He is the patron of Jewish, as well as European Kabbalists, just as Hermes is the patron of Egyptian magicians. This force, concentrated on some object, whether by Solomon, or by Hermes, or by a Raja Yogi of India, that is, by an adept initiated into the secret sciences, is nothing but qualityless spirit and qualified matter. It was this force that created man, the vahan

of Parabrahma and Mulaprakriti. In turn, a person who is aware of this double power in himself can transfer its excess to other vahans. But in order to generate and develop in himself such an excess, he must, first of all, renounce his own personality, give himself completely to the service of mankind, forget his personal self, become first worthy of being a worker of nature, and then eventually an adept.

- But how and in what exactly does he help humanity or even its progress with dendas and rudrakshas? I understand the desire to become an adept, to study the mysteries of nature for the sake of a personal, so to speak, egoistic goal, first of all, and then help others with my knowledge; but I do not see any relation between Rudrakshas and adepts from the point of view of the benefactors of mankind!

- I regret, but I will not undertake to explain this to you given your obvious spiritual blindness. I repeat: in order to become a Raja Yogi, one must first of all unconditionally renounce one's own personality, not have an egoistic goal, because only Hatha Yogis set themselves such a goal, which, as a result, have lowered the significance of the secret sciences in the eyes of the uninitiated.

- But can't you, - the colonel, somewhat embarrassed by the direct lesson, insisted, - let me understand with a simple example why exactly the Raja Yogis, like the Hatha Yogis they despise, wear, for example, wands, these dendas?

- In order for the essence of a dual-quality force not to drift chaotically under the pressure of external accidents of everyday life, but to be, so to speak, in a reservoir, always ready for use, in view of possible events.

- What events, for example?

- Imagine that you are walking down the street with a Raja Yogi and are talking about completely ordinary subjects, but for some reason interesting to him. He holds in his hand a denda that never leaves him - just like this one, - Ananda pointed to his seven-legged cane. - A mad dog is rushing at you from around the corner. The danger is near and your salvation depends on the speed of action, measured not in minutes, but in seconds, moments. Though thought moves with the speed of electricity, yet it may take half a second more than it would take a dog to bite you to set in order the mind that has just been occupied with foreign objects, to extract from the cognitive apparatus the impulses of will necessary to repulse a dog. Without his denda, the Raja Yogi might not have had time to help you. But denda, impregnated with the essence of the power of the Raja Yogi, acts with the speed of lightning: directed against an animal, it instantly paralyzes its impulse to rush at us; and by repeating the movement, the Raja Yogi could even kill the animal on the fly without touching it, if it turned out to be necessary. That's what denda can do in ordinary cases. But to call it therefore a magic wand is wrong, since neither "life" nor Rudraksha can be isolated from our conscious will and thinking or act independently of us. To endow them with such a property means to recognize in them the

presence of a cognitive apparatus like that of a human being and is tantamount to the willful dissemination of superstition and crude worship of matter.

- You just said that denda never leaves the hands of a raja yogi. I never saw, however, such a rod in the hands of Thakur.
- The active force is not in the external form of the vahan, and not only denda may be chosen as the bearer or seat of the "power", - we received an evasive answer.

oooOooo